

ABC WORLD NEWS TONIGHT
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NICARAGUA/CIA>JENNINGS: And now, to that CIA manual for antigovernment < >MANUAL>forces in Nicaragua. It is still a hot topic. Today Sen. Barry Goldwater postponed, until after the election next Tuesday, hearings on the manual, how it came about and what it contained. The State Department was asked about the manual again today, and a spokesman insisted U.S. policy is not to overthrow the Sandinista regime. Well, what about the people on the ground, those in Nicaragua itself? What did they believe about the CIA's plans? ABC's Peter Collins has been on special assignment.

COLLINS: The CIA's decision to train Nicaraguan rebels in the techniques of sabotage and assassination goes back to the early days of the Reagan administration. This former rebel officer, who is disguised to protect his identity, says the CIA arranged for him and others to be trained in Argentina. EMILIO (former rebel): There was in three different groups there went about 60 guys. (sic)

COLLINS: When was that? EMILIO: In '81.

COLLINS: He says the training was to help them overthrow the Sandinistas. EMILIO: How to make it involve all the Nicaraguan leaders, how to get him, how to make a kidnapping, how to put a bomb in Nicaragua.

COLLINS: Later, there was more training in Honduras from one of the CIA's own experts. EDGAR CHAMORRO (former director, Nicaraguan democratic force): He was a counterinsurgency agent in Vietnam and he knew a lot about it. So he came to advise us.

COLLINS: The American lived with the rebels in this safe house in Tegucigalpa. He was known as Juanito and had an

odd habit he had picked up from the Vietcong. CHAMORRO: He used to dress in black, you know, black pants and black shirt.

COLLINS: Edgar Chamorro was in charge of psychological warfare for the rebels and worked closely with Juanito. He says he and the CIA man decided some 5,000 guerrillas in Honduran camps needed guidelines. Another CIA source says Juanito had in mind a manual for a handful of trainers that would draw on U.S. special forces tactics that go back to Vietnam. CHAMORRO: Juanito gave us the know-how and gave us money to produce this book.

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COLLINS: From the beginning, there were disputes over words, about how to get over the idea about things like assassination without actually saying it, because U.S. policy forbid such killings. CHAMORRO: The book never uses the word 'assassination.' The book, in the text what's left...

COLLINS: Does the book recommend... CHAMORRO: Used the word 'neutralize.'

COLLINS: You mean, the strong words like 'neutralization' or 'killings' or 'martyrs' weren't supposed to be in there? EMILIO: Weren't supposed to be in there.

COLLINS: It's understood you're supposed to do those things. EMILIO: It's understood that you're supposed to do that, but not to say it in a manual. Never.

COLLINS: But according to Chamorro, the manual went to this print shop in Honduras because of a slip-up. Juanito, the American agent, was later forced out of Honduras in a dispute with a CIA station chief over the manual. He was replaced by another American agent who told the rebels Juanito had make a mistake. CHAMORRO: He could decide the one, Juanito, because he said you should never write that down. You do it, but don't write about it.

COLLINS: Does this book reflect the philosophy of the CIA? CHAMORRO: Yes, in the case of Nicaragua, yes.

COLLINS: The CIA refuses comment about the manual, and the rebel group created by the CIA officially disavows its tactics. ALFONSO CALLEJAS (Nicaraguan democratic force): We don't condone any assassination of anyone. We don't condone terrorism.

COLLINS: When the CIA operation began, the administration said it was because of Nicaraguan support for Salvadoran guerrillas. As one official put it, 'One dirty little war for another.' Now it emerges from the rebels themselves,

who say that 'dirty little war' included such forbidden tactics as assassination, and the CIA officials not only knew about it, they encouraged it. Peter Collins, ABC News, Miami. <